



## Across the Jordan

### SERVICE

We serve God wherever we go.

#### Power Text

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9, NIV).

#### Key Text and References

Joshua 1; 3; 4; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 481-486; student story on page 34 of this guide.

#### Objectives

##### The students will:

**Know** that new situations are an opportunity to witness.

**Feel** confident that God is leading.

**Respond** by serving God in new situations.

#### Power Point



**New situations bring new opportunities to serve and witness for God.**

## Getting Ready to Teach

### The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After 40 years Joshua, the Israelites' new leader, leads them into Canaan as God promised. They experience a change of environment as well as a change of leadership. God gives Joshua a special message of encouragement and specific directions as a leader. The people cross the river Jordan by a miraculous separation of waters. Afterward they erect a memorial in Gilgal as a constant

reminder of the miracle of the crossing of the Jordan.

#### ***This is a lesson about service.***

God continues to guide, encourage, and work miracles in our lives today. Moving to new communities, schools, or countries can open up new opportunities for us to serve God. We can tell others about how He has led us in the past.

# THREE

## Program Notes

| Lesson Section               | Minutes | Activities                                                                              | Materials Needed                                                          |
|------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Welcome                      | Ongoing | Greet students at door<br>Hear pleased/troubled                                         |                                                                           |
| <b>1</b> Readiness           | 10-15   | A. <i>Don't Get Eaten Alive!</i><br>B. <i>Changelings</i><br>C. <i>Canaan or Desert</i> | Paper, rope or tape<br>Paper, markers<br>Paper, pen, basket, tape, grapes |
| <b>*</b> Prayer and Praise*  | 15-20   | See page 30.<br>*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.          |                                                                           |
| <b>2</b> Bible Lesson        | 15-20   | Introducing the Bible Story                                                             |                                                                           |
|                              |         | Experiencing the Story                                                                  | Bibles, modeling clay                                                     |
|                              |         | Exploring the Bible                                                                     | Bibles                                                                    |
| <b>3</b> Applying the Lesson | 10-15   | Scenarios                                                                               |                                                                           |
| <b>4</b> Sharing the Lesson  | 10-15   | Memory Stones                                                                           | Paper, rocks or stones, colored markers or pencils                        |

## Teacher Enrichment

"The influence of this miracle, both upon the Hebrews and upon their enemies, was of great importance. It was an assurance to Israel of God's continued presence and protection—an evidence that He would work for them through Joshua as He had wrought through Moses. Such an assurance was needed to strengthen their hearts as they entered upon the conquest of the land—the stupendous task that had staggered the faith of their fathers forty years before. The Lord had declared to

Joshua before the crossing, 'This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.' And the result fulfilled the promise. 'On that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life'" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 484, 485).

*What new situation is present in my life today? What opportunities do I have to witness for God? How will I share my story in my own unique and personal way?*

## Teaching the Lesson

### Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their table/small group leader. Have leader ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Then debrief student(s) on their Bible study activities last week. Say: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** (The leader should know what the students' activities were for the past week so he/she can direct discussion.) Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice.

# 1

## Readiness Activities

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

### You Need:

- paper
- rope OR tape

### A. Don't Get Eaten Alive!

Divide the students evenly into two or three groups. Give each student a standard sheet of paper (could also use large leaves). Create the width of the "river" by determining the number of students in each group. Count one "pace" across for each student in a group and mark the banks of the river with rope or tape.

Say: **You are trying to cross the river without falling in. Each team needs to get every member across without touching the "water." Anyone who steps or falls off the paper falls in the river and gets "eaten alive" by crocodiles! They then have to start again. You can use the paper as "stepping-stones," but you can't leave them in the water after you've crossed.** Give the students time to devise their plan for crossing the river.

The Secret: The students must give all of their paper to one student, who puts down a trail of "stepping-stones" that all of the other students can follow. Once the entire team, except one, has reached the other side of the river, the last person must pick up the "stepping-stones" after each step and take them to the other side.

Time each team to see who can cross the quickest.

### Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel stepping out onto the river when you might get "eaten alive"? How does having to go into a new situation or surroundings feel the same? feel different? Let's read our power text, Joshua 1:9, together.** Allow time for the students to find the verse and read it aloud together. **Today we're going to learn that**



**New situations bring new opportunities to serve and witness for God.**

## B. Changelings

Give the students paper and markers. Ask them to draw a picture or symbol for themselves at four different times of their life: birth, 3 years old, 7 years old, and their present age. Allow time for them to complete this and share their drawings with a partner.

### You Need:

- paper
- markers

### Debriefing

Ask: **In what way have you changed physically since you were born? mentally? emotionally? In the way you relate to your parents? In the way you relate to others your age? In the way you relate to God?** Discuss how growth from babyhood to adulthood is a change that most people want and look forward to. Say: **Let's read our power text today from Joshua 1:9.** Wait for all the students to find the verse and read it aloud with you. **You've changed over the years. Change can be good, and**



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## C. Canaan or Desert

Beforehand, prepare one slip of paper for each student and write "desert" on half of them, and "Canaan" on the other half. Fold each slip of paper in half, place them in a basket, and mix them up. Tape signs on opposite ends of the room. Under the sign "Canaan" place some grapes (or other fruit snack).

When the students enter have them select a slip of paper from the basket and go to the side of the room indicated.

### You Need:

- paper
- pen
- basket
- tape
- grapes

### Debriefing

Ask: **How do you feel being where you are? Are you desert people happy or unhappy where you are? How about you Canaan people? Have you ever been in a new situation or surrounding and you didn't want to be there? Let's read the power text for today, Joshua 1:9, together. Today we are learning that**



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## Prayer and Praise



### Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

### Suggested Songs

"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 146)

"We Must Wait [on the Lord]" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 129)

"Follow Jesus" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 150)

"Be Bold, Be Strong" (*Praise Time*, No. 34)

### Prayer

Continue with the paper "keys" introduced two weeks ago. Say:

#### You Need:

- paper keys (p. 137)
- pens

**This week we are learning about the Israelites entering the Promised Land. The key you have been given represents "unlocking and opening up" a new land for them. This week, please write on your key one new situation or location where you want to serve God. After prayer we will add the keys to our ribbon key ring and hang it up.** Say: **Dear God: Thank You for each student here and for their commitment to serve You. Thank You for giving us new situations in which to serve You. Amen.**

### Mission

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* or another mission report available to you.

### Offering

Continue to use the milk or honey containers to collect the offering.

#### You Need:

- milk OR honey container

Say: **One way we can serve God is by giving our offerings. We're collecting the offering in this container because it represents Canaan, the "land of milk and honey," which the Israelites were entering.**

\*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

## 2

## Bible Lesson

## Introducing the Bible Story

Share a time with your students when you had to wait a long time for something you looked forward to. Ask: **Think of a time when you had to wait a long time for something.** Let them share with a partner.

Ask: **Why is it so hard to wait for something you are looking forward to doing or receiving?**

Say: **Our story today is about the Israelites finally entering the Promised Land after waiting 40 years. Let's read our power text together: Joshua 1:9. While they might have been a bit anxious about entering a new country, we can remember that**



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## Experiencing the Story

## You Need:

- Bibles
- modeling clay

Divide the students into 12 "tribes" of Israel. Give each "tribe" a ball of modeling clay and ask them to shape it into a stone and place it at the front of the room. Say: **We're going to read our story today from Joshua 1; 3; 4.** (Divide scripture evenly among students. Students shape their stones while taking turns reading scripture.) **Let's take turns reading a paragraph (a few verses) each aloud.** When you are done, one student from each tribe should pick up a "stone" from the "river" and then together build an altar. (You could also have

selected students acting out the story as you read it aloud, ending in the building of the altar.) Ask: **Why did God ask them to build this altar?** (He didn't want them to forget that He was with them, that He was leading them. He wanted them to be able to tell others what He had done for them.)



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## Exploring the Bible

Say: **The raising of stones as a memorial is common in the Old Testament. Let's find two texts when other memorials were set up: Genesis 28:18-20 and 1 Samuel 7:12.**

Ask: **What were these memorials intended to do?** (To provoke questioning so that the story of God's miraculous interventions might be told over and over.) **How would these altars link future generations with past generations?** (Future generations would remember the great acts of God in their past.) **How does remembering things in the past help us now?** (Gives us encouragement, gives us stories to share with people as a way of witnessing.) **We can remember that**



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**as we share how He has led us in the past.**

## You Need:

- Bibles

## 3

## Applying the Lesson

**Scenarios**

Read the following scenarios to your students. At the end of each, ask how the person is using a new situation to serve God.

**1. Wesley's family is moving across the country because of his dad's job with the church administration. Wesley doesn't want to leave his friends and school, but he's trying to make the best of it. While he's saying goodbye to his neighbors he's able to share with them the reason they are moving, and how his dad serves their church.**

**2. Cassandra's best friend's parents are divorcing. Her friend, Jennifer, is very sad and upset by it. Jennifer tells Cassandra her feelings and frustrations while Cassandra listens carefully. Cassandra is able to share with Jennifer some comforting and reassuring Bible texts she's learned in Sabbath School. Cassandra also prays with her friend on the phone every evening before they go to bed.**

**3. Patrick isn't doing very well in math in school. In fact, his parents have signed him up for a summer math class. He's disappointed about that, but is willing to go so he can stay with his class in school and not get behind. His teacher is a friendly older man. Patrick and his**

**teacher become friends, and Patrick learns that the teacher has recently had a grandson die in an automobile accident. The teacher is not a churchgoer, but Patrick is able to share with him the hope of Jesus' coming and resurrection. This interests the teacher, and he asks for a book to read on the subject.**

**4. Maggie's mom had cancer a few years ago and has been in remission for a few years, but now it has come back again. While accompanying her mom to a doctor's appointment, Maggie is able to share with the nurse how God is taking care of their family and how He has answered their prayers in the past.**

**Debriefing**

Ask: **What new situations are you facing in your life?** (Encourage as many as are willing to share some type of new situation.) **How can you use your new situation to serve God and witness about what He has done for you?** (Encourage responses.) Repeat the power text together. Say: **We can see by the scenarios and our own lives that**



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## 4

## Sharing the Lesson

**Memory Stones****You Need:**

- paper
- rocks OR stones
- colored markers OR pencils

Give each student a piece of paper and a marker or pencil. Ask them to draw an altar of 12 stones and to write on each stone a special act God has done in their lives—something that they

feel particularly blessed about, or some providential working that they feel God planned for them. You may need to help some students think of ways God has been active in their lives. Give them time to share their altars with one or two others near them.

When the students have completed their paper altars, give them each a stone or rock. Ask them to write the power text reference on their stone (Joshua 1:9). Ask: **Are you going to be in any new situations or locations this week in which you can share this memorial stone with someone who is discouraged, sick, lonely, searching for God? with someone who needs encouragement or needs**

**to hear how God has helped you in the past and is continuing to lead in your life? Will you make a commitment with me to share your stone with someone?** (Wait for commitments. You, too, make a memorial stone and commit to sharing it.) **This week, let's be particularly aware of new situations we are in, because**



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**Alternative**

Give each student the number of stones that there are members in the class (small classes) or for each member in their small group (large classes). Have the students write each member's name on one of the stones and encourage them to pray for each student separately during the week, that God will provide the opportunities and the courage for them as they serve and witness this week.

**Closing**

Thank God for the commitment the students made to serve Him this week. Ask God to be with the students as they look for opportunities to serve Him in new situations.

**Note to leader:** Provide a copy of the words of "On Jordan's Stormy Banks" from *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (No. 620) to each student. They will use them in their daily Bible study activities.



## STUDENT LESSON

# Across the Jordan

**Key Text**

Joshua 1; 3; 4

**Power Text**

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9, NIV).

**Power Point**

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*Imagine your father is helping to move friends to a new country. You can send notes back and forth to your father. You have many questions, including how your dad is going to get where he's going because there's a big, flooded river to cross and there is no bridge or boat.*

The following "letters" are the imagined correspondence between a father and son from the tribe of Reuben:

Abba, Shalom!

Father, what's happening now? I'm worried that things just won't be the same without Moses as our leader. Can Joshua do a good job? Will you still go into the Promised Land? If you go, when will it be, and how will you get there? Please write to me as soon as possible and tell me everything. I think about you often, and I pray that you are OK.

—Baram

Shalom, My Son!

Please don't worry, Baram; everything will be fine. Even though Moses is dead, Adonai has not left us; His presence is still with us in the pillar of cloud over the tabernacle.

Joshua is a faithful servant of Adonai, and he has been Moses' assistant since he was a young man. Adonai has chosen Joshua, and He is with him. We will follow Joshua just as we followed Moses.

You asked about the Promised Land. Yes, we are going into the Promised Land very soon. Today we received orders to prepare to cross the Jordan River. I don't know where or how we will cross yet—the Jordan has flooded its banks, and the water is flowing quite swiftly.

I miss you, Baram, and I hope to see you soon, but our work here is just beginning. I will write again once we have crossed over into Canaan, and I will tell

you everything that happened.

—Abba

Shalom, Baram:

My son, I wish you had been here with me today so you could have seen the awesome power of our mighty God! We have crossed over the Jordan, and we are in the Promised Land, finally! Let me tell you what happened.

This morning the officers came around and told us to watch the ark and to follow it wherever it went. All of the soldiers, the men from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, were instructed to stay in front of the people, so I was able to see everything. First, the priests who were carrying the ark began moving toward the Jordan River. A loud whisper went through the crowd, and then everyone became silent. I felt my skin tingling with excitement. We were all marching straight toward the water as if we were going to walk across on the top of it. I held my breath as the priests' feet touched the water at the edge of the river. The water stopped flowing! I have never seen anything like it; it was the most amazing sight!

There was a loud cheer, and all the people began talking and shouting as the news spread through the crowd. The priests walked ahead and stood in the middle of the riverbed while everyone crossed over on dry ground. After everyone had gone over into Canaan, Joshua commanded 12 leaders to each take a stone from the place where the priests had been standing. Then he com-

manded the priests carrying the ark to come up from the Jordan.

What do you think happened then? When the priests came out of the riverbed, the water came rushing in and the river returned to normal. It was just like it must have been at the Red Sea. There was no path, but Adonai provided one for us. Hallelujah! Praise Adonai! For the first time we worshiped God in the Promised Land today. I was so happy, I cried tears of joy. Everyone sang praises to God and worshiped Him. My son, you should have heard the singing! It seemed like the birds and the trees and the whole land were singing, rejoicing and praising God with us. Hallelujah!

When we set up camp for the night, an altar was built with the stones from the river Jordan so that everyone will know of our God's great power. Baram, I can't wait to show you the altar and this wonderful land that Adonai has given to us.

—Abba

## Sabbath

- Do this week's activity on page 24.

## Sunday

- Read "Across the Jordan."
- Begin to learn the power text.
- List all the things God told Joshua to do to be a good leader (Joshua 1:6-9).
- Ask God for opportunities to serve Him this week in new situations.

## Monday

- Read Joshua 1.
- List all the promises God makes in Joshua 1.
- Which of these promises are applicable to you today?
- Pray that God will give you courage wherever He leads you in life.

## Tuesday

- Review the story of Rahab in Joshua 2.
- How were the spies able to serve God in the situation with Rahab?
- Share the "memory stone" you made in Sabbath School with someone this week. If you were not there, tie a "scarlet cord" on your bedroom doorknob to signify your promise to serve God in your life.
- Pray that you will serve God in any situation.

## Wednesday

- Read Joshua 3.
- Sing "On Jordan's Stormy Banks" from *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 620.
- What does the "Jordan" represent in this song? What does "Canaan" represent in this song?
- Pray that you will keep your eyes on "Canaan" as you pass through this "Jordan."

## Thursday

- Read Joshua 4.
- Look at a map to find the closest river to your house, and the closest to your church. Have you ever crossed them? If so, how?
- Ask an adult about an experience they've had with God's power and guidance.
- Thank God for the past experiences of His leading that your family has had.

## Friday

- Tell the story of the crossing of the Jordan to your family at worship.
- Find 12 rocks or other objects that you can pile up to make a temporary altar to God. As you find each one and put it in place, name something special that God has done for your family.
- Sit with your family around the altar and think of new ways you can share your witness of what God has done for you.
- Thank God for giving you opportunities to share Him with others in new ways.